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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the necessity for career counseling and career education which attempts to relate school to the community, to the world of work, and to leisure-time activity from the earliest grades through the retirement years. Learning is designed to occur in the total community rather than merely inside traditional schools. The paper examines the role of the Librarian/Media Center in Career counseling, and also details curriculum trends and developments in career education and career counseling, including innovative programs in the United States. (Author/TRC)

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CAREER EDUCATION: AN UNDERGIRDING FOR CAREER COUNSELLING

S. Norman Feingold *

By enacting Section 406, Title IV, PL 93-380, the United States Congress made career education a law of the land. The reasons are multiple and complex. Far too many youths and adults have been alienated by society, education, training, work, leisure, and life styles. Career education is an attempt to meet the disaffection of this fairly large segment of the population as well as to maximize the assets of others who also need new educational and saleable work skills.

Career education aims to integrate the abstract and theoretical with hands-on experience. Career education and career counselling attempt to relate school to the community, to the world of work, and to leisure-time activity from the earliest grades through the retirement years. Learning is designed to occur in the total community rather than merely inside traditional schools. Individualized instruction is humanized learning. Career education as an integration of learning and participation weaves a meaningful mosaic of the worlds of home, community, school, paracurriculum, and work into a challenging, creative, and productive entity. Career counselling provides support and information that enable individuals to relate their uniqueness to careers for the life-span. Career education globally integrates learning and living; career counselling individualizes the integration process.

Career education and career counselling recognize that there are many ways to learn and many institutional and non-traditional settings where learning takes place. Teaching and learning are no longer limited to the so-called "traditional" school. Teaching and learning are recognized as occurring in many alternative routes from home to sky lab, to adult centres, to ship, to open schools, to TV, to courses by newspapers, to the weekend college, or to any dozens of other settings. Under the career counselling concept, school becomes the real world, not something beyond or akin to the real world. One of the goals of career education and career counselling is to make learning and education more meaningful to individuals.

Career counselling encourages early tryout and exploration in order to give new meaning and motivation to study and other worthwhile experiences. No longer should there be locked doors and unnecessary man-made obstacles to keep people out. Career counselling education promotes the idea that hard choices should be delayed until all basic facts are gathered about the person and the changing world of work.

Career education sets as one of its goals development of saleable skills so that people can move into the job market. At the same time, opportunities remain

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open for people to return to education for further upgrading or change of career directions or even completely new second, third, or more careers. Career education provides entrances, more convenient exits, stopouts, and recreation routes as interests, conditions, abilities, and potential change. Career education at the adult level may be one of the most promising new trends. Career counselling helps in the decision-making process; choices have been widened by career education.

Career options may be widened. People may benefit from continuing lifelong education and training to reach their optimal ability. The expectation is that skills to obtain a job or go on for further education or training or to expand leisure-time pursuits throughout life will be developed.

The Role of the Librarian/Media Centre in Career Counselling

The library/media centre is a repository and disseminator of accumulated knowledge at all levels of learning. The library/media centre may be a most important link in integrating the concept of career education and career counselling. The effectiveness of the library/media centre depends upon its responsiveness to the community's need for a wide variety of communication media and human technological resources.

Because of space constraints, this article can only recognize the growing diversity and complexity of available communication aids. In this article, current developments in career education, new curricular trends, innovative programs, and possible long-range trends in career education and career counselling are delineated briefly.

Curriculum Trends and Developments in Career Education and Career Counselling

Essentially, career education, curriculum trends, and innovative education programs integrate learning and living. This section is necessarily brief because of space limitations. However, career education affects what career counselling can provide.

1. A greater number of curricula at every level of education and training contain more direct learning experiences than formerly. Second-hand passive participation is on the decline.

2. More of the ideas of the total community are being accepted in curriculum development. Not just formal educators, but also counsellors, librarians, media specialists, parents, businessmen, government leaders, union members, and others, are encouraged to participate actively in developing a community-oriented curriculum. School and work are being merged with a synergistic effect.

3. The use of selected adult career advisers and resource personnel from a wide variety of occupations and careers in schools, as developed and employed in depth, for example, in the counselling programs of the National Alliance of Businessmen, by the B'nai B'rith Career and Counseling Services, and by the Presbyterian Counseling Centers, is bringing a new realism to learning and the curriculum. Career counselling preceded career education; career counselling was one of the change agents.

4. During the past five years, there has been a noticeable growth of courses in futurology as early as the elementary grades. These courses encourage students actively to project, predict, guess, and consider possible life styles and careers of the twenty-first century. The growth of elementary school counselling has contributed to the innovative approach.

5. An innovative curriculum relates to all community resources, not merely to what occurs on the campus. At the same time school credit for learning wherever it takes place (travel, military, life experiences, etc.) is offered to an increasing extent.

6. Activities such as German and Spanish clubs, flying clubs, career clubs, and so on, which formerly were considered as extra-curricular activities, are now becoming an integral part of the formal curriculum, an added tool for career counselling.

7. Subject matter is more often being related to career awareness, career exploration, career motivation, career decision-making, career preparation, career entry, and career maintenance and progress. These are all facets of career counselling; integration of living and learning.

8. The career cluster concept organizes the approximately twenty-two thousand different United States jobs into a meaningful system. The complex world of work is placed into a pattern of occupations and careers. Study and related work experiences and exploration are thus logically organized. Various career clusters are used. The United States Office of Education concept, for example, consists of fifteen clusters. The subject matter curriculum takes its shape from the cluster organization.

9. There is an attempt to set curriculum goals in terms of measurable instructional objectives. Evaluative techniques are being built into the operational definitions.

10. Career education and career counselling are having an impact on decision making for women as well as for men. Both may now think more in terms of a career rather than in terms of only a job. Exposure to career awareness and realistic testing of new options increase opportunities to explore non-traditional careers and life styles as well as traditional ones.

11. The use of counsellors and career counselling concepts from first grade through pre- and post-retirement years is more and more an accepted developmental concept.

Innovative Programs in the United States

Many techniques may be applicable to the Canadian work world. This writer, while attending the last annual meeting of the Canadian Personnel and Guidance Association in Vancouver, was impressed with the superior professional calibre of many of the meetings on many topics including the ramifications of career counselling.

Early reports from Operation Guidance, now being field tested in fifty schools in thirteen states, highlight school libraries' and librarians' importance as one of the most valuable community resources. Further information on the project may

be obtained from the Project Officer, National Institute of Education, 1200 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20208.

Over twenty thousand junior and senior high school and community college students are field testing the career decision-making programs developed by the Appalachian Educational Laboratory, (AEL), P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, West Virginia 25321. A unified system relates available career information materials such as the Dictionary of Occupational Titles and commercially published career and occupational information to individual student's interests.

Some field test sites are in classrooms; others are in libraries. The organizational system of AEL can be a basis for library/media centre collections of occupational and career information. The materials of the AEL are designed to be self-instructional.

The Education Research Information Center on Career Education, (ERIC), College of Education, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois 60015, collects and reports information about new programs in career, vocational, and adult education. ERIC can assist librarians and counsellors in information services or in providing general perspective on what is known about career education. ERIC is a resource for all who work directly with students as well as those who are engaged in educational research.

Project VICS, Vocational Information Through Computer Systems, is a computerized guidance information system developed by the School District of Philadelphia, Division of Instructional Systems, Instructional Computer Center, 5th and Luzerne Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19140. This project offers high school students access to career and occupational information written by Philadelphia high school counsellors through use of computer terminals located in the counsellors' offices. Once new information is received, updating of facts can be accomplished in seconds.

Many libraries have innovative programs. In some, volunteers are helping librarians to make their role and resources an added facet to the career counselling process.

Some libraries act in conjunction with the school system or other agencies. In the Montclair, New Jersey, library, the librarian co-ordinates a special program for women interested in continuing their education or returning to work. Librarians are spending increased time with adults who are gaining self-direction with career education and career guidance material obtained from library resources. Private counselling agencies have stressed the role of the library and librarian in career education, guidance, and career development. This trend is also increasing in other work settings. The librarian and counsellor working together make career counselling a much more viable and workable concept. This is particularly valuable for the increasing number of adults who are using public and private libraries.

Two of the many books that contain a gold-mine of information about creative and innovative educational and career guidance programs are Career Education. The State of the Scene, November 1974, and Careers Education. How To Do It? Creative Approaches by Local Practitioners, October 1974. Both were prepared by the Office of Career Education, United States Office of Education.

The staff of the Winston Churchill High School, Potomac, Maryland, have spent considerable time assessing their curriculum and modifying it. Their career

education project aims to make the curriculum more responsive to the changing needs of their students and society. Increased input from students and parents and greater use of community resources are three goals. Numerous additions to the curriculum and use of mini-courses of nine weeks are two results. Flexible but cohesive programs are developed to motivate students of diverse needs, abilities, and interests.

Changing job patterns and markets require continuing career education and career counselling and continual upgrading of skills. At the same time, many people have increasing leisure time that encourages new avocations that may be self-taught. Home study or correspondence schools are means of learning while working. Home study schools use texts, study guides, workbooks, recordings, slides, sample materials, and kits. Colleges, military services, and corporations involve personnel in home study. Increasing numbers of young adults are using this method for career exploration and career advancement and as a means of self-actualization. A list of accredited home study schools as well as further career information can be obtained from the National Home Study Council, 1600 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20009.

The Developmental Career Guidance Project was initiated in 1964 in Detroit, Michigan, in order to provide improved career guidance for disadvantaged youth. Evaluative data provide support for program implementation and expansion.

The program started in six schools as a pilot project. Three elementary schools fed into two junior highs that fed into a senior high school. The project is now operative in thirty-four elementary and secondary schools serving about thirty-seven thousand students. All participating schools must qualify under the standards of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This program points up that youth from lower socioeconomic areas can be helped to develop realistic occupational aspirations. By helping to upgrade occupational and educational aspirations, self-concepts are improved. Programs of this sort have been reinforced by counsellors with a cutting-edge interest and commitment to counselling.

There are a number of innovative career education and guidance programs throughout the country. Two particularly well-known programs are the Orange County (Florida) Career Development Program and the Dallas (Texas) Skyline Career Development Center.

The philosophy of community colleges reflects career education and career counseling concepts at the adult level. A few known for their programs are Pasadena City College in Pasadena, California; Montcalm Community College, Sidney, Michigan; the Community College of Denver; Lane Community College, Eugene, Oregon; and Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, North Carolina.

For further ideas, you may wish to obtain a list of career education newsletters by writing to the Office of Career Education, Room 3319-B, ROB Building, Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 7th and D Streets, S.W., Washington, D. C. 20202.

For a list of periodicals in guidance and counselling, write to the National B'nai B'rith Career and Counseling Office, 1640 Rhode Island Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

Tentative Conclusions

Creative and productive career educational curricula cut across all subject matter. Initial and constant careful planning and coordination are required to integrate the new curricula into existing programs.

Creative career counselling points up that we can help maximize the education and career needs and goals of more youth and adults. These programs in the United States offer choice and realistic options and promise to an ever expanding group of people. Lifelong opportunities to learn and to explore career preferences in depth may lead to work and leisure that is meaningful and more satisfying and more necessary today than perhaps ever before.

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